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Keeping the Wheels Turning At Central Vermont Public Service Corporation (Part 2)



Late 1970s truck equipped with 'Hi Ranger' two man bucket.



Roy Chase poses with a 1955 Ford line truck at the CVPS exhibit area at the 1955 Rutland Fair.



A Brattleboro display of the 244 items of equipment typically carried on this 1960 CVPS Chevy line truck.

Keeping the Wheels Turning

At Central Vermont Public Service

Corporation (Part 2)

By David G. Zsido

In 1955 Central Vermont hired a person, who ultimately would become the company's first Director of Transportation. Glenn Anderson was unquestionably the first person to assume those responsibilities. Glenn had served in the military during the Korean War starting in 1952. Upon his return home, he initially worked for a local Jeep dealer, Lindholm Motors in Rutland. Then on 28 November 1955, he began his employment with CVPS. He began his utility career as an Apprentice Rodman on the Survey Crew. Then on 30 October 1957, he became a Second Class Garage Mechanic on the 3 to 11 PM shift; greasing trucks on a cable operated lift at the company's Cleveland Avenue Facility.

Sadly, Glenn had only been employed in the Transportation Department for a relatively brief period of time when his supervisor, Bob Johnston, passed away. Shortly thereafter, on 2 February 1959 Glenn became the acting Garage Supervisor. Informally, but quickly, he then became the 'go to guy' in the garage. During these years the transportation maintenance function was included within the responsibilities of Ronald Reid, the Power Production Supervisor, to whom Bob Johnston had reported. Over a relatively few short years, on 1 January 1962, Glenn's position was upgraded to that of Supervisor of Auto Equipment. On 1 January 1969 he was named Transportation Director.

As the Company entered the 1960s, Glenn was there to oversee the implementation of some dynamic equipment advancements; particularly the introduction of bucket trucks and corner mounted digger trucks. These two innovations completely altered the manner in which electric line construction and maintenance would be undertaken for scores of years. Glenn carefully studied the possible vendor choices for these types of apparatus. It was probably during 1965, when Central Vermont took ownership of its first bucket truck. Glenn relied on Chief Lineworker, Bernie Bushee, to assist him with the 'in-service' training, as he introduced the new trucks to line workers throughout the Company. As Glenn recalled, the first corner mount digger truck was manufactured by Telcon. According to then Garage Mechanic, Eric, "Rick" Anderson, the Telcon hydraulic digger was small, but powerful.

Rick said that its biggest short-fall was that it was lacking in lifting capacity.



DAVID ZSIDO

On 5 May 1964 Bernie Bushey installs an ornamental light in the Rutland City Depot Park using a 1964 Chevy line truck equipped with a Holan bucket, one of the first in the company fleet.

During the mid-1960s the fleet color of Omaha Orange was introduced, and became the company standard. Glenn recalled that, "this made sense for safety reasons; that color particularly enhanced the visibility of the CVPS equipment to other motorists". Prior to that, the fleet vehicles were painted a dark forest green.

Many of the transportation enhancements, which Glenn implemented, endured, if not permanently, then for many years thereafter. One such concept was the development of the Company's 'Pony Express' or 'Pony' as it came to be known. He devised this inter-company delivery system for hardware, equipment, and correspondence in the early 1960s. Basically, a dedicated truck and driver would make regularly scheduled deliveries to the various Company offices and stockrooms, which were scattered throughout the geographical regions of Vermont and New Hampshire. The first 'Pony' truck was #29, an International Fleetstar single axle truck with a van style body and a canvas top. Ed Bradish was the very first 'Pony' driver. There were a select few drivers, who assumed these duties as full-time 'Pony' driver after Ed. These included: Duane Fontaine and Arnie Delong. Another select category

of drivers did the 'Over-the-Road' driver job. These drivers handled the chores of operating the Company's tractor trailer units. George 'Mush' Lanfear was the first 'Over-the-Road' Driver. He assumed those duties in the late 1950s. After which, he was followed by subsequent drivers, who included: Danny Cox; Billy Littler; Larry Johnston; Charlie Martin; and Peter Guay.

One rather unsuccessful endeavor was the acquisition of a 'double bucket', that is, an aerial device with two working platforms; one mounted on either side of the upper boom. From the photographs in the files and from what Glenn recalls, the Company devoted considerable energy into the study of the usefulness of the 'double bucket'. In fact, it appears that the Company brought in demonstrator units to determine the concept's worth. Convinced that the 'double bucket' had a use on the system, the Company purchased one. The truck was assigned to the Ascutney District on the New Hampshire border. From the start, the hydraulic lift was proven to be a dud. With a worker in each bucket, the hydraulics couldn't develop the pressure to lift the boom. The supplier couldn't seem to figure out the problem either. Glenn and his chief mechanic, Bob Muzzy, decided to remove one of the buckets entirely. Then the hydraulics would only 'kick in' if someone on the ground pushed upwards on the bottom of the aerial basket. Ultimately they decided to tear the hydraulic system apart and 'replumb' it. With that effort they got the unit working as a single bucket. It never functioned at all for the remainder of its life as a 'double bucket'. However, about this same time, the company did acquire a pair of two man aerial buckets. Unlike the 'double bucket', these Hi-Ranger units could hoist two workers in the same aerial basket. These trucks were assigned to the Rutland and St Johnsbury Districts.

Glenn was also active in the early years of the Electric Council of New England's (ECNE) Transportation Committee. Directors of Transportation from various New England electric utilities met on two or three occasions each calendar year to compare notes on fleet management. One such issue in the 1960s had to do with the substantial introduction of hydraulically powered devices, such as, aerial bucket trucks and digger trucks. Glenn was instrumental in creating the ECNE 'Hydraulic School', which the ECNE Transportation Committee oversaw. Each year mechanics from the various New England utilities were offered training in the latest specialized techniques of maintaining and trouble-shooting hydraulic systems.

Glenn also recalled that in the early 1960s the local Chevrolet dealer in Rutland, Sam Stowell, called him one day to introduce a 'great' new device. Stowell operated his Chevy dealership at 240 South Main Street.

However, the item wasn't a new Chevrolet; it was a Ski-Doo snowmobile. Sam offered to take Glenn for a ride to demonstrate the capabilities of the snow-mobile, and suggested that the motorized sled could climb to the top of nearby Pico Peak, where the CVPS radio antenna was located. On its maiden voyage, after struggling for an extended period in the deep mountain snow, Glenn convinced Sam that they should return to the base of the mountain before the snowmobile got permanently mired.

Quite importantly, Glenn was the main force behind the effort to keep pole 'dinkeys', small pole trailers, exempt from State highway use registration, and free from the requirement for lighting and brakes. With a pole 'dinkey', the pole itself becomes the main beam of the trailer when in transport. The exemption is still in place today in the Vermont Statutes.

Another innovation in the early 1960s was the introduction of a couple of specialized trucks to the fleet. These were uninsulated 'ladder' trucks, which had a primary purpose of being used for street light bulb change-outs. These ladder trucks were outfitted on Ford chassis. One of these units was garaged in Rutland and the second was located in Randolph. Prior to the addition of these two units, the Company had at least one other earlier ladder truck on what appeared to be a 1955 Ford chassis. Often, when then Garage Mechanic, Rick Anderson was assigned to perform routine maintenance on the Randolph truck, the lineworkers would quiz Rick as to why the maintenance was required. Then they would advise Rick that Merle Dimick, the Line Superintendent, "would only allow us to drive the truck in the local town parade!"

The fleet in the 1960s was predominantly powered by gasoline engines. Only one of the prime movers was diesel powered. That particular unit was an International Emeryville conventional tandem tractor.



DAVID ZISMAN

The International Emeryville tractor in December 1979.

The Emeryville, and the many gasoline powered Internationals of the 1960s were all purchased through Seward's Sales & Service; the local International dealer on South Main Street about a quarter of a mile south of the Stowell Chevrolet garage. Toby Seward was owner of the business which over the years provided numerous International truck chassis to CVPS for its line trucks.



A pair of relatively new trucks parked at Cleveland Avenue in 1967.

In the 1970s Central Vermont continued to enjoy significant growth with its sales and customer expansion. This was triggered in part by some limited industrial growth. However, ski area expansion, coupled with vacation home development, seemed to trigger a substantial portion of that growth. To keep up with the demand for the facilities essential to accompany such growth, the vehicles and the working equipment used had to constantly improve.

Along this line, McCabe-Powers material handling buckets were spec'd out and delivered to CVPS. These units were among the first true material handling buckets in the CVPS fleet, that had substantial lifting capacity; coupled with higher working platform elevation. The only serious drawback with these units was the twenty foot placement required for their four outriggers. While these units worked extremely well in commercial and industrial settings and ski areas; they weren't nearly as practical for many of the narrow Vermont country roads. These aerial lifts were installed on Chevrolet C-60 chassis.

Looking back at that period in the CVPS Transportation History, Glenn also noted that on 1 January 1971 CVPS became the first Vermont Fleet, which was allowed by the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles to perform State Inspections on its own fleet vehicles. Glenn still had a copy of the manual with all the Inspection 'Bulletins' issued by the State.

To help compensate for the high fuel prices during the Oil Embargo of the 1970s, a limited number of Chevy LUV diesel pick-ups were introduced as a fuel efficiency innovation. In perhaps the final purchase of Chevrolet chassis for large line trucks, an order of four C-60 Chevrolets was placed with Stowell Chevrolet in 1974.



DAVID ZSIDO

A new Chevy LUV diesel pickup is parked beside an old International Transtar at the Rutland Gas Turbine garage.



DAVID ZSIDO

VT Governor Dick Snelling inspects a GE-100 Electric Car. (l to r) are: CV President James Griffin, Rutland Mayor Gil Godnick, CV Vice President Tom Hurcomb, GE Rep Dick Kelley, and CV Vice President Dick Mallary

A few years later in 1980, the General Electric Company visited the utility with its GE-100 Electric Car concept. G.E. had introduced the vehicle on 25 September 1978 as part of its 100th Anniversary. When the car came to Rutland, a contingent of CVPS officials was joined by, not only the Mayor of Rutland, but also the Governor of Vermont. Several years later, some talented members of the Transportation Department designed and built their own version of a Chevrolet S-10 pick-up electric vehicle. This in-house version seemed to out-pace the commercial models of the time, but suffered from the same basic flaws of battery weight and life-cycle. As a further endeavor to break the situation of still being saddled with much higher fuel costs, CVPS continued to search for concepts, which would help alleviate its fuel costs. In 1980, it introduced the Ford Fiesta model for some of its Field Engineers and Meter Readers. As the 1964 "R" Model International tractor started showing signs of wear after years of service, Glenn ultimately decided it was time to upgrade. A 1972 International Model 2000D Truck was purchased through Seward's Sales. It had a 230 Cummins diesel engine with a sixteen speed Spicer transmission.



1972 International Model 2000 road tractor with portable substation equipment trainer.

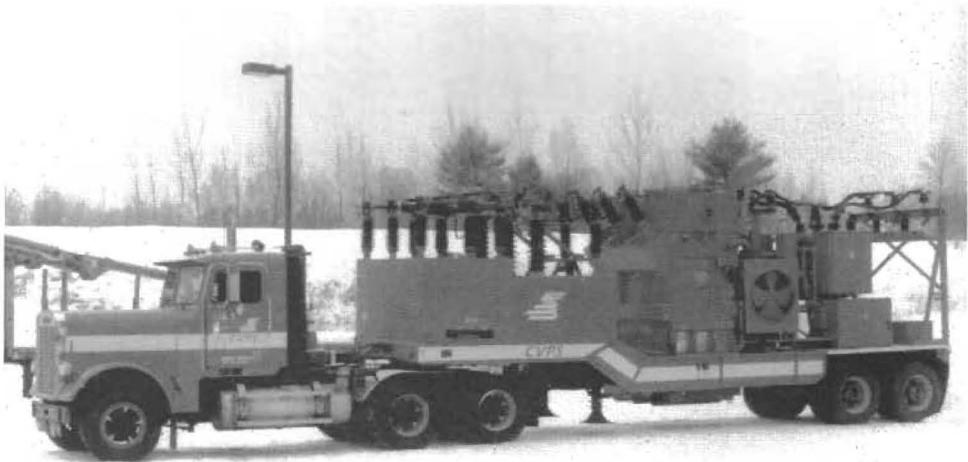
In 1976, Glenn was approached by then Vermont Governor, Richard Snelling, with an invitation to join the 'Governor's Cost Control Council', a group, which was impaneled to provide an oversight into State operations and to provide suggestions for cost savings and greater efficiencies. Glenn was assigned to the State Transportation Department Group. He devoted approximately a month to this endeavor and was later recognized in 1977 for his efforts, when the final report was released.

In the 1980s the space needs of the Transportation Department had grown with the numbers and sizes of trucks that the Garage Mechanics

were maintaining. They had largely out-grown the woefully inadequate facilities at Cleveland Avenue.

Meanwhile CVPS had recently scrapped two large in-doors fuel oil fired turbines located in its Rutland Gas Turbine Facility. The nearby building, located on Green's Hill Lane offered suitable and ample floor space for the Transportation Department's growing needs. Glenn Anderson took advantage of the opportunity and moved his operations to that location during the early 1980s.

Another significant switch in the very early 1980s involved the conversion of the large truck fleet to diesel engines. The vehicles of choice were International trucks and with their long-standing DT-466 engines. Glenn's Capitol Budget proposal for fiscal year 1980 demonstrated the need for some \$901,500 in equipment upgrades. In the proposed allocation, there would be twelve heavy hydraulic units; two light line trucks; twenty-two pick-ups; eleven passenger cars; and four miscellaneous off-heavy vehicles purchased. For many years, Glenn shipped large vehicles that were being retired to a nearby auction house in Clifton Park, New York. Northway Exchange Auto Auction became the place where CVPS liquidated its large trucks and specialized equipment. Often, smaller passenger vehicles, pick-ups, and four-wheel drive units were auctioned 'in-house' among the CVPS employees.



DAVID ZSIDO

1980 Freightliner hitched to portable substation equipment.

Two major pieces of the Transportation Department equipment were upgraded in the 1980s. First, the International Emeryville tractor, number was replaced with a 1980 Freightliner.. The new truck had a four hundred horsepower Cummins diesel engine, and was geared to handle the Company's heavy portable substations. It served the Company's needs for thirty years. Glenn also decided to upgrade a truck,

which was known in-house as 'The Pony'. This truck was predominantly used to transport goods and materials throughout the Company's network of operating centers and generation facilities. Leading up to its replacement in 1984, these particular chores had been handled with a Fleetstar International. However, in 1985 CVPS placed an order for its only documented Mack Truck. The new 'Pony', a 1986 Mack "R" Model was purchased and delivered by Vermont Mack, Incorporated. It would stay on the road for CVPS until August 2001, when it was finally retired after some fifteen years of service with CVPS.

It was also during the early 1980s that Glenn introduced the 'rebuild program'. In doing so Glenn combined the skills and talent of his mechanics with the need to save capital dollars. So rather than purchasing a complete new unit, his mechanics would perform a cost-effective restoration of selected trucks. Chief Mechanic Bob Muzzy did the work on the first such rebuild, and Mechanic Bill Messer accomplished the rebuild on the second chassis. In later years as the program progressed, Glenn found it more practical to rebuild the hydraulic lifts and diggers, and then retrofit them onto a new truck chassis. Moreover, it was also an ideal way to convert the chassis from a previous gasoline powered unit to a diesel-powered unit. This program continued until 2002.



On 1 July 1985 Glen Anderson (on the left) retired. The Transportation Department poses with Company President James Griffin and Pat Garahan

Glenn Anderson decided it was time to retire. His final day of work was 1 July 1985. When this occurred, he passed the Departmental controls to another Anderson; Rick. The two men were not related. Rick (Eric S. Anderson) had been hired by Glenn on 24 March 1970, after his discharge from the U.S. Coast Guard. He had worked under Glenn as a Garage Mechanic, and later became the Shop Foreman. Glenn resided on South Street in Poultney where he continued to work on his small farm. He passed away on 23 September 2017 at the age of 87.

During the years that followed, CVPS would invest substantially in the upgrade of its buildings and facilities. In 1986, one of the first new projects, the Rutland District Service Center, was completed. Shortly thereafter the Cleveland Avenue Facility began witnessing a tremendous growth in vacancy. The largest number of vehicles, which had been previously housed at Cleveland Avenue, were the line trucks and meter vehicles from the Rutland District. Around the same period of time, the Transportation Department temporarily moved its operations from the Gas Turbine Facility to rental space in the former Firestone Tire Store in the Rutland Shopping Plaza. This was done to accommodate an asbestos abatement process that was underway at the former Gas Turbine Facility.

However, before Rick Anderson had fully settled into his position as the Director of Transportation, he was called upon to provide input for another important building construction project. This new facility would be named the Rutland Systems Building on Post Road. Among a multitude of other departments, it would also be the new home to the Transportation Department. Rick provided guidance and direction for the modern age complex, which would house his department. When Central Vermont's new Systems Building was completed in 1989, it was the first time in the history of the company that the Transportation Department had a facility designed particularly for its use and needs. When this new structure was ready to be occupied, the remainder of vehicles at Cleveland Avenue were moved to either the Systems Building or the Rutland Gas Turbine Facility, where the Electrical Maintenance trucks had occupied the void created by the Transportation Department's relocation.

As CVPS left the 1980s it was surprised by the discovery that it was in violation for operating in interstate commerce without proper authority. An Electrical Maintenance vehicle had crossed the Connecticut River from Vermont into New Hampshire to work on Company-owned equipment in Claremont. When they passed through a D.O.T. vehicle inspection point, they were cited for transporting substation batteries

across the state line without a permit. Quickly, Rick and his supervisor, David Ruby, assembled an effective in-house U.S.D.O.T. Committee to assure that CVPS would come into compliance immediately. The group quickly and successfully completed this very important compliance mission.

In part, this also required careful monitoring of motor vehicle incidents, which included maintaining a safe drivers' recognition program. The Company's Risk Manager John Jankowski coordinated the assessment of vehicle incidents from a 'chargeable or non-chargeable' perspective. In terms of rewarding safe drivers on an annual basis risk he developed a safe drivers' award concept, which featured die-cast replica models of various CVPS trucks. David Zsido designed a different model truck for each calendar year. This program was initiated in 1990 and extended through calendar year 2012. The first fourteen models were produced by the ERTL Company; while the last nine were manufactured by 1st Gear, Incorporated.

Motoring along into the 1990s the standard package for the meter readers was either a Chevrolet S-10; typically equipped with the 'Tahoe' package, or a Ford 'Ranger'. Both types of trucks were equipped with automatic transmissions and four-wheel drive to assure the ability to get to the hard to reach mountainous regions throughout Central Vermont's service territory. Rick and his crew of garage mechanics also experimented with electric vehicles during the 1990s. A few of these were commercially produced small trucks; typically on Chevrolet S-10 chassis. However, with the talent of the Transportation's crew members under the direction of the Foreman, Ed Baker, CVPS assembled its own



The EV # 4 – the electric vehicle made by Ed Baker in the CVPS shops using an S-10 Chevy chassis

version of an electric vehicle, on a Chevy S-10 chassis. Unfortunately, between the weight and cost of the batteries, and limited maximum mileage range, the results of this experiment were not very fruitful.

Robert 'Dike' Dikeman, who was the Transmission Line Department Superintendent, came to Rick in the early 1990s with some specific equipment needs. 'Dike' had a desire to increase his equipment inventory with the addition of a rubber-tired backhoe and a bulldozer. He justified the purchases by enumerating considerable cost savings as opposed to using contractors. Rick spec'd out both pieces from the John Deere line and the equipment was acquired. However, at that time CVPS only had one prime mover to handle the frequent moves of all of its tracked equipment. Rick also implemented a change to the disposal sales process of 'surplus' vehicles. He decided to hold a public auction at a CVPS facility to dispose of the retired pieces. The initial auctioneer was the Thomas Hirschak Company, who conducted the first sale at the Gas Turbine Facility. In later years the sale was conducted at the Company's Engineering Building in Rutland. Ultimately, with the completion of the Systems Building, the sales were moved to that location under the direction of Eric Nathan Auctions.

On 28 February 1992 in the early morning hours of the day, shocking news was delivered to the company's control center; the Cleveland Avenue Garage was on fire! Since the time the company had vacated this location a few years earlier, it had subsequently leased the building to a local general contractor, the John A. Russell Corporation. Russell was using the facility to garage and maintain its construction equipment. Zsido will always remember that morning. As he walked out of the front door of his home, he heard the Rutland City general alarm fire whistle sound. As he looked across town he noticed a large plume of smoke in the vicinity of Cleveland Avenue. Quickly he ran back into the house and called the CVPS control center. When the dispatcher answered, Zsido asked, "This may seem like a stupid question, but is Cleveland Avenue on fire?" The dispatcher advised that to his knowledge it was not. However, since the Company was no longer using the facility; the fire alarm system feeding back to the control center had been deactivated. Nonetheless, Zsido headed to Cleveland Avenue to satisfy his curiosity. As he got close, he couldn't believe his eyes! The structure, that had served the transportation needs of CVPS and its predecessor companies for some eighty years, was fully in flames. The building that had survived two major floods; the Great Flood of 1927 and the 1947 Flood, was destroyed. Fire investigators believed the fire was started in the crew room by a defective coffee maker.

But there were some bright spots in the 1990s for the Company. Participation in two events would place members of the Transportation Department on a team of volunteers, who were undertaking historical projects. In November of 1994 under the direction of Rick, a few garage mechanics and equipment operators, along with a couple of transmission line workers assisted with the harvesting and extraction of a sixty-five foot balsam tree from the National Forest in Southern Vermont. They loaded it onto the trailer being pulled by an antique Mack Truck, owned by Ed Fabian of West Rutland. Ed was a member of the Green Mountain Bull Dawg Chapter of the Antique Truck Club of America. The tree was transported with a convoy of antique Mack Trucks to Washington, DC, where it was placed on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol as the National Christmas Tree. Rick and the Transportation Department would once again team up with the Bull Dawg Chapter in 1998. With this second historical event, pine trees were harvested in the residential neighborhood, known as 'Hospital Hill' in nearby Proctor. Some of these trees came from the yard of CVPS President, Robert H. Young. The sixty to sixty-five foot full length logs were then transported by CV's 1985 International 'Eagle' tractor #891 to CV's System Building yard, where they were loaded onto another convoy of antique Mack Trucks, owned by members of the Green Mountain Bull Dawg Chapter. The logs were transported to the Chelsea, Massachusetts site, where the U.S.S. Constitution was docked. The CVPS 'Pony' and the 1984 "R" Model Mack, were part of that weekend convoy to Massachusetts. The logs would be used for replacement masts on 'Old Ironsides'.

On 1 December 2003, Eric 'Rick' Anderson decided to retire from CV. His Transportation Department career with the company totaled more than thirty-three years. Rick is a life-long resident of Proctor.

Chris Lyons came on board CVPS on 1 March 2004, as he assumed the duties as the third Director of Transportation. Chris arrived at CV with a broad background in the transportation industry. Through his previous employment he had built strong relationships with Ford medium/light duty trucks and Altec aerial lifts. Shortly after he assumed the duties of Director of Transportation, he determined a need to update the fleet, which was beginning to age. In the year that followed, vehicle replacement purchases amounted to some seventy vehicles. This had to be one of the largest single year vehicle replacement programs in CV's history. He placed an emphasis on purchasing diesel powered Ford pick-ups in the larger F-250 size. He brought the first tandem bucket truck into the fleet, although the truck was not deliberately spec'd out by CV.

Chris also advocated standardizing on a fleet color of white, rather

than the traditional Omaha Orange; both as an economy and also to enhance the resale value during the eventual sale of the vehicle upon disposal. The suggested move to white was not widely accepted and encountered resistance. Concerns were expressed about safety, tradition, and customer recognition. As somewhat of a compromise, it was agreed to leave the bucket trucks and digger trucks orange, but all other fleet vehicles would be ordered white. However, when two large International Model 9900Is were ordered as new prime movers, these 2006 model year trucks were also white in color. Chris' tenure at CVPS was relatively short in comparison to his two predecessors. He resigned from the company on 2 November 2005 to pursue other transportation related endeavors.

On 15 January 2006, Dan Mackey assumed the responsibilities as the fourth and final Director of Transportation for CVPS. Dan's career with CV began on 26 February 1990, when he was hired as a stockkeeper. Eventually he progressed to the position of Procurement Agent on 11 August 1996. One of the greatest challenges, that Dan encountered during his early assumption of the transportation responsibilities, was resolving the issue of single axle bucket trucks exceeding axle weight limits for highway use. One particular bucket category of note was the Posi-Plus design. The Posi-Plus buckets were extremely reliable and relatively maintenance free. However, these aerial devices were stoutly built and restricted the amount of payload the trucks could actually transport. Often the rear axles on the International chassis were found to be one thousand pounds or more over-weight. In addition, the desired working heights for aerial buckets had generally increased from forty-two and forty-seven working platform heights to fifty and fifty-five foot working heights. Obviously, this increased the weight on the chassis. After trying a number of proposals to either shed materials and/or redistribute some of the material and equipment in the side tills, it was determined that the buckets and digger trucks would have to be spec'd on tandem chassis. Dan undertook an aggressive replacement program to upgrade the fleet and assure regulatory axle weight compliance.

As another initiative to help reduce fleet fuel consumption, CVPS acquired some fifteen Ford Escape Hybrids for meter readers and a select few departments. One of these was converted to a 'Plug and Go' Hybrid, which was placed into service as the 'mail carrier' with a daily route in the Rutland Area delivering mail and packages to the various CVPS office buildings. Along this line the company was the first utility in Northern New England to place a hybrid bucket truck into service. The 2008 International 4300 Hybrid, #978, was commissioned on 27 June 2008. The Hybrid was equipped with a fifty-five foot Lift All aerial

bucket. Ultimately, it was the only hybrid bucket truck in the CVPS fleet. Moreover, Dan was also instrumental in developing a Prius 'Plug n Go' program. He worked with two Vermont colleges to further the studies of the economic advantages of such vehicles. During this era, the Company also saw the need to introduce a small, versatile, and light-weight bucket truck, which could be operated economically and get into tight areas. CVPS purchased eleven Ford F550 four wheel drive bucket trucks. These smaller units were out-fitted with forty foot VersaLift aerial buckets. 2010 would mark the official retirement of truck #165, the 1980 Freightliner tractor. Without a doubt it was the longest serving vehicle in the entire history of the CVPS fleet.



DAVID ZSIDO

Hybrid International bucket truck with Lift-All aerial bucket.



DAVID ZSIDO

Ford F 550 with a Versalift bucket.

Under Dan's direction, for the second time in the company's history, the organization was involved with the harvesting of the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree; this time in 2007. Once again equipment and vehicles from the CV Transportation Department went in the Green Mountain National Forest and assisted with the cutting. Then the Tree was transported by CV's 'antique' Freightliner, number 165, along a half mile stretch of U.S. Forest Service road to a landing, where it was loaded onto an antique Rogers trailer hitched to a 1971 Brockway, owned by Fred Beauchamp of Rutland, for the trip to Washington, D.C.

Upon entering into the second decade of the 21st Century, Central Vermont Public Service Corporation had a total fleet of some four hundred and ten pieces of equipment; including bucket trucks; digger trucks; road tractors; small trucks; passenger vehicles; trailers; and tracked equipment. Dan Mackey was busy providing constant emphasis on assuring compliance with regulations put forth by U.S.D.O.T. One considerable issue, which arose in late 2010, was the Comprehensive Safety Analysis, or CSA 2010 Safety Inspection Program. This required considerable on-going awareness training for the approximate two hundred U.S.D.O.T. category employees and their supervisors.

In addition, constant escalating fuel costs; placing gasoline at over \$3.90 per gallon and diesel fuel at more than \$4.20 per gallon, required Dan to direct further emphasis on conserving fuel with the implementation of a company-wide idling restriction policy. By June of 2011, CVPS continued to explore more energy efficient vehicles, when it ordered a Chevrolet Volt. This vehicle, which was delivered on 3 October 2011, became the first Volt delivered and sold in the State of Vermont.



Three of four Directors of Transportation pose with Freightliner # 165: (l to r) Dan Mackey, Glenn Anderson and Rick Anderson.

As a further footnote to #165, the 1980 Freightliner was ultimately spared from the 2011 Fleet Auction. On 1 June 2011 Dan received an inquiry from William Lucci, the Assistant Director of the Adult Technical Education at the Stafford Technical Center in Rutland. Through CDL Instructor, Fred Beauchamp, Lucci had heard that CVPS would be auctioning the truck. In his letter to Dan, Lucci questioned as to whether CVPS would consider donating the truck to the school for its CDL Training Program rather than placing it in the auction. Dan ultimately secured the approval for the donation, and the transfer of ownership took place on 19 July 2011.

Throughout its entire history, CVPS was always engaged with civic projects of all types. It appeared that the company could always be counted upon to offer support in local parades by providing company vehicles. There was a clear pattern of such from the 1950s until the time it ceased operations in 2012. Fortunately, many of these events were photographed and preserved. The events could have been a simple town wide dairy celebration. However, it could have been something more significant, such as, the Vermont Dairy Festival of 1955, when President Eisenhower visited Rutland. It may have been to join in various Winter Carnival Parades in Rutland with the Company's 'mascot' 'Reddy Kilowatt' jumping on board for the ride. In one particular parade in Brattleboro, CV's entry was an indistinguishable truck completely covered with artificial snow as a smaller 'Reddy Kilowatt' skied down the windshield slope. A CVPS semi was nearly always a participant in the Annual Halloween Parade in Rutland; one of the largest events of this type in the country. Perhaps the final Halloween Parade, which CVPS participated in, was in 2009. This also happened to be the fiftieth anniversary of that particular parade. In preparation for that event, volunteer employees had constructed Captain Hook's pirate ship. On that cold and rainy night the float was hauled by truck #20, a 2006 International Model 9900. The rig was chauffeured by CVPS Over-the-road driver, Charlie Martin. Dave Zsido was drafted to be 'Captain Hook'; standing on the ship in a light cold rain.

Throughout its history, CVPS always seemed to be on the leading edge of transportation enhancements. Curiously there was one particular mode of non-truck transportation of special interest. More than likely, CVPS was possibly the first utility in Vermont to employ this mode of travel. A few photographs in the files captured an early piece of rotary aviation in flight just west of Rutland in the Castleton area. It was a Bell style helicopter as photographed in 1957. For many years through 2012, CVPS employed the services of small helicopter flying service

contractors to provide aerial patrolling of transmissions lines; either on a routine basis or special need basis following destructive storms.

Ultimately, the last order of newly spec'd bucket trucks arrived at the CVPS Systems Building in the early spring of 2012. There were five new ALTEC AM series aerial buckets mounted on International 4400 chassis. These trucks were destined for various work centers throughout Vermont; from St Albans to St. Johnsbury and from Rutland to Springfield. Four had fifty-five foot working platforms, while the last one had a sixty-foot working platform. As had been the long-standing practice, the company provided formal 'in-service' training on these new pieces. The last series of 'in-service' training was conducted on 30 April 2012 for the crew members in Rutland and Springfield. The Rutland training was provided for two trucks: One fifty-five foot platform and the sixty foot unit. The training was conducted by the ALTEC representative, Mark Kruger; the CVPS Fleet Manager, Dan Mackey; and the CVPS Risk Manager, Dave Zsido.



On 30 April 2012 CVPS held an in-service training for crew members from Rutland and Springfield. As equipment became more technical this training became more critical.

Perhaps the very last significant CVPS Transportation related event, that occurred, was when the CVPS 'Pony' Driver, Arnie Delong, was awarded the Vermont Truck & Bus Association's Master Truck Driver Award for 2012. This became the very first time that a Vermont utility driver had ever been presented with the award. The ceremony took place at the Stowe Ski Resort on 8 September 2012.



Arnie Delong

Only some three weeks later on 1 October 2012 the highly recognizable CVPS logo on hundreds of trucks throughout the State of Vermont disappeared forever as Central Vermont Public Service Corporation no longer existed.

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‘Closing the Tailgate’

The CVPS name, which had been so recognizable to so many generations of Vermonters for more than eighty-three years, came to the end of its road on 30 September 2012. Curiously the company name, Central Vermont Public Service Corporation, stretched through Vermont history like a banner between two devastating floods: the Great Flood of 1927 and the Flood of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Throughout the years in between, the workers and their trucks were called out for numerous other significant natural disasters, such as, the Flood of 1938, the Flood of 1947, the many scattered tornadoes of the 1950s and 1960s, the October Snow Storm of 1987, the great Ice Storm of January 1998, the April 2007 ‘Norican’, and so many others. Incredibly, CVPS was recognized four times by the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). In 2007, 2008, 2010, and 2011, CVPS received the EEI Emergency Recovery Awards for its rapid response and recovery from various natural disasters. The final award was for the inexhaustible efforts undertaken by its workforce during the Tropical Storm Irene recovery. In looking back more than one hundred years at the history of Central Vermont Public Service Corporation and its predecessor companies, as is true with any electric utility organization, to keep the lights on, it has always been necessary to keep the wheels turning. From as early as 1906, and possibly earlier, CVPS and its predecessor companies had done just that!